

THE PRESIDENCY:

Freedom to Think

During the six years of their close personal and professional friendship, President Eisenhower and the late John Foster Dulles often discussed ways of improving the U.S. Government. Most of the ideas they came up with they discarded (e.g., adopting the parliamentary system; of having the legislative branch elect the Chief Executive). But one idea they liked—and the President talked about it last week in a speech to a graduating class of the State Department's Foreign Service Institute.

The plan: To reorganize the executive branch so that high government officials would have more time for con-

templation—to think about their jobs.

"Before I leave this office," Mr. Eisenhower said, "I hope to lay before the Congress a plan that I believe will do something of this kind."

Mr. Eisenhower did not amplify his idea, but White House aides sketched its outlines. The President wanted to establish a new top-level Cabinet post, "First Secretary of the Government."

The First Secretary would be responsible to the President for the conduct of all foreign affairs. He would oversee the State Department, the international activities of the Commerce, Agriculture, Labor, and Treasury departments, and the operations of such independent agencies as the International Cooperation Administration and the U.S. Information Agency.

Mr. Eisenhower feels that the First Secretary would relieve the President of such time-consuming matters as settling jurisdictional disputes, and thereby give the President more time to think.

How would the First Secretary find time to think? He would not be saddled with administrative chores, and he would be exempt from attending long, tedious, committee meetings—in theory, at least.